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THE FOURTH JOINT DEBATE

BETWEEN

GEORGE NORTHROP, Esq., AND HON. WILLIAM D. KELLEY,

IN THE HALL OF THE SPRING GARDEN INSTITUTE, THURSDAY EVENING,  
SEPTEMBER 29, 1864.

LEONARD R. FLETCHER, Esq., MODERATOR.

REPLY OF GEORGE NORTHROP, Esq.

PHONOGRAPHIC REPORT OF D. WOLFE BROWN.

*Fellow-Citizens* :—After all the discursiveness of my friend for some time past, his wandering over the length and breadth of this country, he has come to the conclusion to answer, ridicule, or attempt to answer, certain propositions and questions which were stated by me at the first meeting, and which have been repeated at each meeting since. Before, however, recurring to what he has said upon those subjects, I take leave here to state to him and to you that he shall not place me upon just such points as he pleases, and, when he gets me upon a foundation which he has built, attack me on account of the weakness of that foundation; for I admit, in advance, that his foundations are weak, and I do not intend to stand on them.

He says that he is in favor of the war. He declares that I am in favor of the Confederate States and their war. This, I have already stated over and over, is incorrect, and I again affirm my first statement as to the incorrectness of his suggestion. I have said from first to last, as those who have heard me will admit, that I am not fighting the battle of the South here before you;—I have never attempted to do so. I am fighting for my own rights and privileges as a Pennsylvanian, and I do not intend, sir, [addressing Judge Kelley,] that either you or I shall be placed in a false position in this contest, (I won't do, sir, to march me down in your imagination side by side with Jefferson Davis, and then put the bayonet that you are so fond of alluding to against my breast. It won't do, sir, to talk about your theory of blowing out brains, and place me where you have a dead line on me. I know very well where you would have me; but *I am here*, and I may as well say it now, in thanking you, gentlemen, for the kind gentlemanly manner in which you have listened to all that has been said in this discussion,)—I am here before you the living evidence of the power of the Democratic party,—even out of office, and away from patronage to assert and maintain under the Constitution the rights which protect you and protect me. Three years ago, gentlemen, would this discussion have been allowed? The free speech which we have to-day has been extorted by the manly position of the Democratic party, which even its enemies have respected. This is the party which it is contended is always wrong; but I believe that once in a while at least, it has about it an element of right and of power.

I have said over and over again that I am not the apologist of the rebellion. I have not anything upon the record to equal Abraham Lincoln's apology for secession and rebellion. Why put me in that category? Is it fair, sir? Find me one tithe of his record in support of both to show that I have ever favored either, and I will thank you.

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But, sir, when you talk about my position, let me modestly refer to yours. You are a man of war. Unmitigated hostility is your cry. You have no sympathy with the man who talks of peace, or who would bring about great results by peace. Have you been, sir, life-long a war man? Was there not in 1850 a peace convention or congress held in this city, at which Elihu Burritt, fresh from the great Peace Congress of Paris, was present, and spoke? Were not you, sir, one of the Vice-Presidents of that Peace Congress or Convention, which passed resolutions to the effect that the time had passed when war should be the arbiter of questions between men and nations? Why, sir, what is the difficulty now? If various texts of Scripture and the mission of Christ himself were invoked at that time as illustrations of the value of peace, why are not those illustrations of equal applicability now? There had been rebellions prior to that time; there had been wars prior to that time. Why was it that then your heart melted for the abstract suffering of humanity by reason of war, and that now you have nothing but terrible relentlessness in the midst of the dread realities that are oppressing your own countrymen? Why can you sympathize with the horrors and sufferings incident to the wars that have been fought in Europe, and urge a peaceful solution of international difficulties, and ask in the name of the Christ of peace and the God of humanity, that war should not be heard of throughout all lands except yours? Why is it, sir, that with you at that time peace was so good a thing, and that now the man who even talks of peace—of pausing in this march of war and carnage is called a rebel and a traitor? Why was it that peace was then the great principle that should be striven for, and by which all difficulties might then have been settled? I am sorry that I have not here the pamphlet containing those resolutions and speeches; but I am certain that you will not deny the record. I profess at least, to be consistent; and if I ever had stood up for peace as I do now, I would keep the record through all the exigencies of the bloodiest contest, because I know well that a departure could not be justified as a matter of principle, but as a matter of personal feeling and hatred; and I say farther, that you have no right to indulge feelings of hatred and bitterness, and to invoke nothing but the elements of power and destruction, and talk of blowing other men's brains out, and of putting bayonets to other people's breasts. We at home, sir, can talk about those things with a great deal of satisfaction. We can hear of the shock of armies; we can hear of the thousands of dead piled up; but the man who asks that contending armies shall pause is a "rebel," and forsooth, a "traitor," though he asks it for the reconstruction of his country and the rights of the people. It won't do, sir, to erect weak foundations, and tell me that I stand on them. I do not stand upon any such principles as the gentleman attributes to me, and I have avowed it over and over again. I am not fighting the battle of the South. I am fighting the battle of the North—of the Middle States, of *Pennsylvania*, as against either the revolution of the South or the friendly hatred of New England which this Administration has allowed to control the theory of their government.

Well, sir, I *have* sympathy for any suffering man. I have sympathy even for the man who is hung, when the law has pronounced the sentence, and though it is a proper execution of the sentence. Why, sir, have you no sympathy? It is generally considered that mercy is the grandest attribute of the Deity. Why, then, should it disgrace a man to plead for mercy?

Gentlemen, I tell you that there is something behind all this "love of country" and "this broad land of ours shall be united again" and "the flag floating over every part of it." There is something behind all this, and you, sir, know there is.

When the gentleman talks about an armistice, he speaks as though that necessarily gave up everything that had been taken on either side—as though it withdrew the armies from their threatening position. It is not so, and he knows it is not so. Why not pause? You have gone "onward to Richmond" long enough with bayonets and with cannon. Might you not pause in some other spirit than a spirit of hatred? Might you not pause for some other reason than because you were compelled to do so? Is there nothing but the brute force of conquest on the one hand, or the brute force of successful opposition on the other, that can bring a pause in this conflict? I say that there is reason for pausing beyond that of the necessity for quiet and rest. There is a reason for it in the great future—the future of reconstruction which, as I shall show, means in the gentleman's view something different from what he has explained.

The gentleman has alluded to the course of the Administration with regard to Admiral Wilkes. He has stated, I believe, that he voted for the resolution of thanks to that officer, and also voted for the practical condemnation of him under Mr. Seward's reply. There is just the objection I have to him and his party. It is just that double-barrelled policy which I want to understand. I want to know what alternative directions are to be pursued. I want you, sir, to lay down your line of policy so that I can understand it. One of my objects in discussing these political questions with you, is that I may find out, if possible, what your theories are. In some respects you agree with Mr. Lincoln; in others, as I shall show, you differ from Mr. Lincoln. These are just the difficulties. I want that which is of more importance to the citizen than any thing else—a principle which shall be uniform in its application, so that you and I may always know what the law is, and may always be protected in carrying out that law.

You have read an extract from the letter of General Sherman in which war is pronounced to be a dire calamity, and thus you always characterize war when you refer to a war-out of this country. I admit the principle, and I say that the direst of all wars is a civil war, conflicting elements in the bosom of the same country. For taking this ground, I am blamed. I am called a "sympathizer with the Southern rebellion," because I show how all this conflict has legitimately sprung from the antagonisms taught in certain sections of this country.

The gentleman has said that in the case of a conflagration, we may burn down a house or blow it up to save other property. He contends that there may, in certain cases, be a necessity for such destruction, in order that still greater destruction may be prevented; and he contends that this principle of necessity, transcending all law, is to be applied to the present condition of our country. Now, I am here contending for principles which will put out the conflagration itself, without blowing up houses or "blowing out brains." It is on this point that I take issue with the gentleman. He insists that there must and shall be war—that there shall be no earthly means admitted for settling that war—that it shall not pause or rest—that it shall keep on one direct and inevitable line to a certain result—or rather, to an uncertain result. He contends that because war has been inaugurated as the policy of the Government, therefore we are justified in blowing up everything else, provided we SAVE THE WAR. I do not believe in that doctrine. I want to stop the war before the necessity comes for blowing up everything else. I want to stop the conflagration before it threatens everything. If I could have had my way, I would have put out this conflagration when a single bucket of water would have been sufficient to have done it. I now stand here, and the Democratic party stands here, to struggle for the privilege of putting out this fire of civil war before it extends everywhere and reaches its terrible height. We contend that you cannot quench this spreading conflagration by putting camphene and other combustibles into the fire.

The gentleman has urged the impossibility of the States coming back as they were. Gentlemen, I do not think it an impossibility, except under his theories. I believe that it is very true that when you have dismembered and destroyed a thing to the utmost extent of your power, you may not be able to restore it to its original condition. That is the objection—that you assume the right to destroy or impair, and the right to keep what you have so impaired, in that condition. It is simply because you have done and are doing these things, that it has been made almost impossible to reconstruct the Union as it was under the Constitution. In order that the work of reconstruction may not be rendered impossible by that destructive policy, I and the great party to which I belong are asking you to-day to pause. We say to you do not go on until you so change the elements that there can be no reconstruction. Do not go on until there is left in the Southern States nothing but mere desolation. Do you ask the great Northern people to continue acting under your theories until the work of reconstruction shall be impossible? I say, pause: stay your hand and see whether there is not a possibility at the present time of reconstruction before the work of destruction has proceeded farther. You have, it is true, dismembered Virginia, and you ask me how she shall come back. Well, I say to you frankly, before you go to work to dismember other States, and create additional difficulty, try whether you cannot bring them back as whole States. This is my ground. When you get affairs in such a position that reconstruction is impossible, what then is left you? When you tell me that it is impossible to reconstruct under the Constitution, is it because you do not intend that there shall be reconstruction under

the Constitution? Is it because you agree (though you have not so announced it) with the principles of Mr. Lincoln's proclamation, declaring that the Southern States shall never come back except without slavery? That is the question on which I want you to avow yourself.

Is that your ultimatum? Is that the position you take? Must you go on dividing and destroying, taking away every element of right which those people have under the Constitution, and then turn, and ask what their rights are? I want the great reconstructive principles applied, and I want them applied before it is too late; for I want a reconstructed union of States—aye, States with sovereign elements in them, and not mere provinces to wait the beck of any power or any Administration—to be mere apapages. I do want States brought back. I do not want them sliced up to suit your particular views about slavery or any thing else. I do not want the white men of the South destroyed from the face of the earth that the negro and the New England man may hold those provinces of the South, and settle and work them. What is the object of the present policy? What can be the result? What are you fighting for? You are fighting certainly to overwhelm and destroy the white element of the South. Now, you cannot bring those people back after you have destroyed them; you cannot restore those outraged men to brotherhood with you. That is out of the question. Your whole idea of reconstruction seems to be, as I first alleged, a reconstruction in which the only thing recognized in the South should be its broad acres, and not the population, or the principles of the people of the South. I want to stop this war if I can, and bring men as well as acres back again. I want this broad country preserved as much as you do; but I want it for a different purpose from that for which you desire it. I do not want the South brought back desolated that it may be farmed by the enterprising gentlemen of New England who will release the slaves from the "terrible" bondage which so shocks their humanity, and transfer them to a condition which will be pretty nearly equivalent, when those slaves shall work for their *liberal* New England masters.

The question of wages is not the important thing. It matters little, I think, in a question like this, whether you pay the negro by his keep, or whether you pay him by—I was going to say gold, but I will say paper, out of respect to my friend. It does not matter to me in what particular compensation you may pay him. There are a great many white men in the North who work all their lives for their mere support. I agree with the gentleman thus far, that I would like to see every Northern man do a great deal better than the slave in the South, and make as much as possible beyond what he needs to meet his daily wants. But, gentlemen, there are a great many who do not do more than that. This question of wages is a very pretty thing to throw out; but apply the test and see what it comes to at last. Stripped of everything, the whole question comes down to the single matter of the theory of slavery.

I now turn to notice another subject to which the gentleman has referred at a former meeting; and in following the course of his remarks I must necessarily be somewhat desultory. I desire to meet all the gentleman's suggestions, and will do so to the best of my ability. When the gentleman was reading the other night from the Constitution or by-laws of a certain alphabetical society, I did not understand precisely whether he called them the K. G. O's, or the S. G. O's, or the Sons of Liberty.

JUDGE KELLEY. Some of them were called by the latter name.

MR. NORTHROP. Will the gentleman allow me to see what they call themselves? I have never had the pleasure of looking at the pamphlet before.

JUDGE KELLEY. [Handing him the pamphlets.] That is the report of the society of which Vallandigham is the commander; here are the others.

MR. NORTHROP. I propose to show who besides Mr. Vallandigham belong to the Sons of Liberty. I see that they are so called, sir, in your pamphlet.

JUDGE KELLEY. It is not my pamphlet; it is theirs.

MR. NORTHROP. Well, sir, there is one of your abstractions again. I ask the gentleman for a paper which he produces, and when I call it "his pamphlet" he says, "Oh no! it is not my pamphlet; it is theirs." Now, here is just the peculiarity of the gen-

tleman. He is very much like the Frenchman's flea—when you put your finger on him he is not there.

MR. NORTHPROP reads from the Pamphlet the title of the Society "Sons of Liberty."

Well, now, gentlemen, I happened fortunately to have to-day, a little statement about these Sons of Liberty, and as the gentleman seems so exercised in his mind about that subject, I propose to read from the Philadelphia *Constitutional Union* of July 19th, 1862, a little account of the Sons of Liberty. I had forgotten all about this thing until the gentleman made it a particular point in this case that "the Sons of Liberty" should have a proper position in this discussion. Well, now, as I told the gentleman the other night, I could not say whether they belonged to a Know-nothing organization, or whether they belonged to the Union League. I have the satisfaction of announcing to-night that they are a branch of the Union League, and were the foundation of that organization. I hope that now I have at least on one point satisfied the gentleman that this terrible association, which I first heard of almost from him, is one that he can perfectly endorse as "loyal." Now, to my record.

[MR. NORTHPROP reads from the paper.]

### "THE SONS OF LIBERTY."

"This is a title of a secret political society, which has its head in this city, and branches in all parts of this and other States. Its purpose is to amalgamate and thus make more effective all forms of opposition to the Democratic party, the Constitution and the Union. The head-quarters and meeting-place of the society in this city, is at the Sansom Street Hall, in Sansom street, between Sixth and Seventh streets. Stated meetings are held on Friday night of each week, when members are proposed and elected, reports received from the different committees, and other matters suggested and acted upon which are calculated to further the interests and objects of the association. The members are bound together by oaths so shockingly blasphemous and revolting, as to preclude their publication in our columns,—oaths which bind them to use all their energies to frustrate the efforts of the Democratic party to rally the loyal, patriotic and conservative men of the country, upon the platform of the "Constitution as it is, and the Union as it was," and thus rescue the nation from that perilous condition into which it has been plunged by thirty years of the Abolition prayers, labors and exertions."

I will not take up time by reading the whole of this; but the Sons of Liberty seem to sympathize, as stated here, with Wendell Phillips and men of that kind, as against the Constitution. Let me refer, however, to the names of some of the officers, as given by this paper. The President was a gentleman, by name John Dolman. The Vice-Presidents were R. M. Batturs, Charles Humphreys, Robert M. Foust, Morton A. Everley. Secretary, John G. Franklin. Corresponding Secretaries, William B. Leeds, Charles O'Neil, J. Wagner Jermon. So the list continues. I find that among what is called the council of that association are Messrs. Amos Briggs, William B. Mann, William M. Bull, John G. Butler, James Freeborn, C. A. Walborn (who, I believe, is the post-master of this city, appointed by the present Administration.) Here are the names of ninety-six gentlemen, all given as the council to be elected at a certain meeting.

Now, gentlemen, that may seem to you as a very unsatisfactory record. There we have the organization of the Sons of Liberty, whom the gentleman has been for the last two nights trying to crucify. I sympathize with him in his efforts. The statement published in this paper led unfortunately to a certain legal proceeding, and in the same paper of July 26, 1862, is an account of the examination of the President of this very society, under oath. The account is given in these words:

"The President of the Secret Order, known as 'The Sons of Liberty,' (Mr. John Dolman,) on Wednesday last instituted a suit for libel against Joseph Severns, Esq., alleging him to be the proprietor of *The Constitutional Union*, and charging him with libel in the publication of an article in that paper, on the 19th instant, in reference to the 'order of 'The Sons of Liberty.' The hearing took place before Alderman Beitler, and resulted in Mr. Severns being held to bail in \$800 to answer the charge. The following is the testimony of Mr. Dolman, the complainant, as given before the magistrate, and copied from the *North American* :—

"Mr. John Dolman was now called to the stand. On being sworn he said that he believed the article published in the paper was a libel on him and others, and prejudicial to all. He desired to make a brief statement, so that the case could be properly understood. He said he was the President of an association called 'The Sons of Liberty.' The article he complained of is headed 'The Sons of Liberty,' therefore there can be no one alluded to but me. The publication of the names appended to the libel is a copy of a printed ticket used in our association at an election for officers." (So the names are nailed to the association as being upon a ticket to be used at an election.)

"CROSS-EXAMINED by Mr. Brooke.

"*Question.*—Where do you meet?

"*Answer.*—In Sansom Street Hall.

"*Question.*—When?

"*Answer.*—On Friday evenings.

"*Question.*—What is the object of your association?

"*Answer.*—To sustain the country and preserve the Constitution and the Union, and to put down treason."

It appears that they are to constitute themselves the judges of "treason;" that was the doctrine even at that early day—although the gentleman admits, and the Democrats have always thought, that the courts, instead of private bodies of men, trying you in secret, ought to be the judges of these crimes.

"*Question.*—Is it a secret association?

"*Answer.*—Yes.

"*Question.*—What are the qualifications of membership?

"*Answer.*—Loyalty and citizenship.

"*Question.*—Is there a form of initiation?

"*Answer.*—There is.

"*Question.*—What is that form?

"*Answer.*—I decline answering.

"Mr. Brooke pressed the question on this point, for he said that it was positively necessary to know all about the association in order to ascertain whether the publication of the alleged libel was really a libel. He claimed the right as a citizen to expose any society. The law knows no secret society, no matter what may be its objects.

"The Alderman replied that he could not see it as the counsel did. If the society is unlawful, it is for the defence to show it.

Mr. Brooke said, Well, your honor, I dispute the fact that there is such a society as the Sons of Liberty.

"Mr. Dolman (still on the witness stand,)—I have sworn there is.

"Mr. Brooke.—Well, sir, it is right that I should know its forms and customs.

"Mr. Briggs.—Well, you have heard them already. You have heard of the initiation, and that its object is simply to sustain the Constitution and the laws.

"Mr. Brooke.—What takes place at your meetings?

"*Answer.*—We initiate members.

"*Question.*—What else?

"Mr. Briggs (interruptingly)—Now, may it please your honor, what, in the name of common sense, has this to do with the charge of libel? Why ask such irrelevant questions? It is only taking up time for nothing. Let the counsel of the defence take the article as published, read it, and then propound his questions to meet the charges. There is no use going on a fishing excursion to find out irrelevant matter. Let us come down at once to the point—is the article complained of true or is it false?

"Mr. Brooke reads the article to himself, and says:—Are the members bound by oath?

"*Answer.*—They are.

"Mr. Brooke now read aloud that the oath taken by the members is too shocking for publication, and then asked the witness if it was so?

"*Answer.*—That statement is false.

"*Question.*—Is there nothing said about the Democratic party?

"*Answer.*—No, sir, not a word.

"*Question.*—(Mr. Brooke's eyes on the paper.) Are the members instructed or requested to find out the doings of any political party?

"*Answer.*—(Promptly.) No, sir; no allusion is ever made to any political party, unless you call the Secessionists a party.

"*Question.*—*Don't the Sons of Liberty make efforts to sustain the present Administration?*

"*Answer.*—*No, sir.*" (They do not do anything, you see. They do not even do that.)

"*Question.*—Well, what are you organized for, then? (Mr. Brooke now raised his head from reading the paper.)

"*Answer.*—It is to support the Government of the United States.

"*Question.*—What is the form of the oath and the initiation?

"*Answer.*—I decline to answer.

"*Question.*—Have you a pass-word and a sign?

"*Answer.*—Yes, sir.

"*Question.*—What are they?

"*Answer.*—I decline to answer.

*Question.*—Would they criminate you if you should state them?

*Answer.*—Well, no.

*Mr. Briggs* now objects, because the questions are not cross-examination.

*Question.*—Do you consider there is any malice in this publication?

*Answer.*—I do think it comes up to what is known as legal malice. I think I am the person alluded to in the article,—not personally, but as the President. I was not advised by any of the members to enter suit. I had some talk on the subject with a few members. I told several that I intended to bring suit for libel.

*Question.*—Have you a sign of recognition outside of the lodge?

*Answer.*—Yes, we have.

*Mr. Brooke.*—That will do."

Now, gentlemen, I know that from the candor and frankness of my friend, he will thank me for explaining what he has had so much trouble to find out,—who are the "Sons of Liberty." On that point I think my explanation is satisfactory. If it is not, I certainly cannot make it more so. I have gone into the gentleman's own party to prove what that association is, and what are its objects, as well as these can be ascertained from testimony under oath, and if I do not do better, it is because they do not give me an opportunity. Now, sir, why not say frankly that this was an association to which your friends,—men who are prominent in your party, have belonged, instead of reading from a book which I never saw, and I was going to say, never heard of, and I do not believe that I did until you read it to us, to make us believe that all the Democrats belong to that society. I do not know what other object you could have had. I do not know what other reason there should be for such an argument, no matter if there should be a section of my party belonging to secret organizations. If the gentleman argues with me that we have taken their title and transferred their principles I say,—Well, so be it; if you set a bad example (and I do not know when you set very good ones,) we must follow the best you set. I have given the gentleman all the record that I can give him. So much for the secret organizations.

The difficulty with the gentleman seems to be that Mr. Vallandigham belongs to this secret organization. Mr. Vallandigham is, I think the gentleman said, the President of this organization. Well, I do not happen to be a member of the Administration party. I have no control of any part of the "secret service fund" of, I think,—twenty or thirty millions of dollars, of which no account is ever given; and I cannot tell all the secrets of an organization which seems to be an organization of the Republican party, or certainly of gentlemen belonging to it. I do not know what Mr. Vallandigham has secretly, but I do know what he has openly, done. Just let us see what he has done. We all know the old story about giving a dog a bad name; but when you are seeking to hound a man down and use his name as a word of terrible import, it is very well to understand what the man has done, and why he represents such a fearful element. I understand it; you understand it. Mr. Vallandigham was (and the Administration have in act so declared) unjustly banished for commenting upon an order of General Burnside; and he comes back in the face of day to his own country, and they dare not touch him. That is his story. I therefore say that Mr. Vallandigham is at least a bold, brave man; and if he does belong to secret organizations which are strong enough to sustain him, it is because you have made it necessary that there should be some such protection for the citizen. You do not leave a man to his individual rights and his rights before the legal tribunals. You took Mr. Vallandigham before a court martial, though he was a civilian and owed no military service or fealty, and you pronounced upon him a sentence of banishment. Now, sir, show me the law for that. Show me the law for a punishment of exile in this country. When you do that, I will talk to you about the way in which the proceedings were conducted. You know,

sir, and the Administration sitting quietly while Mr. Vallandigham ranges the broad extent of this Northern country, know, that he was unjustly exiled and is rightfully back. What has he ever said against the country, against the Constitution, against the laws? You did not dare to try him, and you dare not now try him under any law before a civil tribunal. Sir, do not stigmatize a man whom you dare not accuse openly of a crime, and whom you dare not try before the tribunals of his country. Do not abuse the man whom *you dare not touch under the power of the law.*

It is a very easy thing to apply opprobrious epithets to men; but it is another thing for those men to deserve them. I want the people to understand now the difference between words and facts. Because a man raises his hands in affected holy horror and says, "Vallandigham!" I do not want you to believe that there is a besom of destruction that is going to sweep away everything. I admit that the man who stands in times like these against the power of an Administration and its bayonets—who has found the truth and maintains the rights of himself and his fellow men, is terrible to power, and all such men will be terrible to power. But so much for Mr. Vallandigham.

I have replied to the summary which my distinguished friend upon the other side made in his opening speech. If he had gone farther he probably would have made the line between us still more distinct. He would have dared to say: "I am a Union man; you (referring to me) are a secessionist." He fancies distinctions to suit himself. But I take the liberty of stating before you, for myself, what my position is, and what my doctrines are. I still assert that right, and I will not be put upon false grounds, or made seemingly to assume positions which I have not uttered or suggested, and to which I have only alluded when the gentleman himself has introduced them.

The gentleman still insists upon the war, and I am very much out of his good graces because I beg leave to differ with him in regard to the result of this war. He takes the position of Artemus Ward, a celebrated writer of jocular character, who has announced that he is "for this war to the last drop of blood of any relation his wife has." The gentleman is in favor of everybody but himself fighting. Well, gentlemen, although some men must stay at home to keep up excitements, the best test in the world of the thorough, unmitigated honesty which prompts a man to sustain a view is the extent to which he will go in carrying out that view. I must say that I, personally would prefer peace; I would rather that a man should not have "his brains blown out." I have a totally different set of principles from those which the gentleman advocates. I stand now on the same platform on which the gentleman stood in 1850, and I maintain that the proper way to settle difficulties in national affairs is by peace. I only ask that this peaceful method of settlement shall be tried. I do not ask that the hostile armies shall be withdrawn; I do not ask that the guns which General Grant may have taken in his *short, sharp career to Richmond*, shall be given up. I do not ask anything of the kind. The gentleman knows very well that an armistice requires no such thing. Let the contending forces stand in precisely the position in which Hood and Sherman stood when they had their armistice of ten days. In that case was anything given up? Now why not pause once in a while? If our adversaries will not agree upon fair terms of settlement, so much the better for your theory; then the war must go on. If they will not accept a fair proposition, you will have everybody in the North on your side. Is it not worth while, instead of having this difficulty in the North, to satisfy our minds by giving us the opportunity of knowing whether they will agree with you or not? If they will not agree to fair terms of settlement, then you put us in the wrong. But you take good care not to allow any such opportunity for peaceful agreement. Even in advance of any propositions made toward you for quiet and peace, you lay down as a *sine qua non* to any peaceful suggestion, conditions which you know will not be accepted. I want the gentleman to come to the point and say whether he believes that the proclamation of President Lincoln, "To whom it may concern," embraces a proper principle, and whether he believes that the country is to be more effectually saved by that than by stopping the conflict now and having the Southern people come back, though they come back with slavery. That is the question which I want the gentleman to answer.

The gentleman, in order to show that the Democratic party left him, has cited General Cass. Now, sir, I understand that General Cass has written a letter supporting the Chicago platform and nominees. I do not know whether that letter has yet been published; but I saw a gentleman who informed me that such a letter had been

written. It will be published perhaps to-day. So that General Cass is not a reliable witness to show that the Democratic party endorses Mr. Lincoln or favors his re-election.

The gentleman also quotes Benjamin F. Butler—General Butler, of New Orleans, and of New England, and of any other place where money is to be made. Well, sir, I for one do not feel remarkably unhappy that the last few years of General Butler's record are not with the Democratic party. I do not believe *that the man who could not live in quiet in a single town of Europe, any more than Haynan*, (which I believe is the case with General Butler,) is the proper judge for me in questions of propriety. I do not believe that the man who is quoted as having been the General Jackson of modern times in New Orleans, has made such a record there as to make *any white man or any white woman proud of him*. You may take them all, if that is the kind you get. We are perfectly satisfied that you should take them and use them. There are others who have also been willing to do what it is always certain men who have been violently and suddenly converted will do—take the most extreme views on the opposite side to make people believe how much in earnest they are in their change of feeling or opinion.

I will now notice the remarks of my friend in relation to the propositions; and I hope I shall be enabled somewhat to enlighten him; certainly I will try to do so. These five propositions are, as you will see, dependent to a certain extent one upon the other. He has admitted, first, that "the Constitution of the United States is within its limitations the supreme law of the land, and the only bond of the union of the States;" and secondly, that "the only mode by which the Constitution can be altered or amended, is prescribed by the instrument itself." The third proposition is, that "when any department of government exercises any power beyond or antagonistic to the Constitution, it is revolution." Now, I proposed by that to show that there were two ways by which the Constitution could be changed: one was by the legal form of amendment, and the other was by an antagonism to it, which was revolution. When the gentleman, having looked into a dictionary and found that the word revolution is applied to a coach wheel, says, that he understands the spokes and tire of a revolution, I am very frank to say that I do not. I *tire* of one kind of revolution, but that is not the revolution of a wheel. I admit that there may be a revolution of a wheel; but I do not think the gentleman has gone far enough in his dictionary. There is such a thing *in politics* or government as a revolution. By-the-bye, I just now see the application of the gentleman's idea about a wheel. Boston is called "the hub of the universe;" and turning constantly round this central point of New England, the only theory of a revolution with him is that it must turn upon just such a hub. He is right, New England has always thought that she alone had a right to revolutionize. The New England people assumed the right to preach the doctrine of secession so far as they were concerned, when it suited them. But it does not suit them now, and they oppose it. Very well; I did not favor it when they advocated it; I do not favor it now when advocated by the South.

Now in regard to the meaning of this word "revolution," I think, as I said before, that in determining the meaning of words, it is not worth while to limit it to a certain particular thing; nor is it worth while to make a slang application of it, or stretch it beyond its proper application. The word revolution means the overturning of a government—a resistance going to a certain extent against a government. Now, what the gentleman cannot understand, and what I am trying to make the people of this country believe, is that, while ordinarily, revolutions in government have been revolutions of the people against the ruling power—a direct antagonism and opposition of the people to overthrow the government, and establish for themselves some new form of government; there may be a revolution by the government itself against the people. Governments in most countries are different from ours. Few governments are constitutional governments, and even where they are, they recognize some hereditary right and prerogatives in the rulers. I began by saying to you that our government was founded on a totally different principle—the sovereign right of the people. The framers of our government made a Constitution which not only bound the people, but bound and limited the power of the departments of the government. Now, while there may be a revolution by the people against the ruling power, yet, where there is a Constitution which defines and limits the powers of the controlling or executive element of a government, and when

that controlling or executive element—that department of government—yes, sir, *that department of government*—establishes a power beyond or antagonistic to that Constitution, it does revolutionize that government; because I want you to remember one thing, contrary to what the Administration party have been trying to make the people believe, that *Mr. Lincoln is not the government*. He is the executive power in the government. When I say the government, I mean the combination of the elements which constitute the government in our country, which are the Executive, the Judicial, and the Legislative powers. I reiterate my proposition, that when any department of government, Judicial, Legislative, or Executive, establishes any power beyond or antagonistic to the Constitution, it is revolution—a direct opposition against the principles of the government. It matters not whether the people on the one hand or the Executive power on the other, revolutionize against the government and the Constitution, it is equally revolution. They equally defy the law. The Executive power has not merely defied it in words; it has arrayed armed bands, as much so as Southern men have arrayed armed bands against the Constitution. This is what I mean; and I hope that at last I have made myself understood in using the term “*department of government*,” and in using the word “*revolution*.” Any department of government which assumes the power and has the ambition, revolutionizes this government as much as the people can revolutionize the government, because between the two, stands that on which the government is founded, and whether the people or the rulers, as they are called, illegally set it aside, either or both revolutionize the government.

I hope that I have explained the proposition to the gentleman's understanding. I go farther. I will not rely simply upon my own doctrine on this subject. I accidentally turned to a work which I think the gentleman will admit is of great authority—Geo. T. Curtis' “History of the Origin, Formation and Adoption of the Constitution of the United States, with Notices of its Principal Framers.” And here the gentleman will see precisely what was the point which I took with regard to amendments and revolution. I say that an amendment under the Constitution is a legal change; the alteration of the Constitution in any other way is an illegal change; and it may be revolution either by the people or by a department of government. And here you find the doctrine I have laid down stated by this very learned and distinguished gentleman, who, it may not perhaps be amiss to say, is, I believe, a New Englander.

He says in this work on the Constitution, vol. ii., page 473:

“The existence and operation of a prescribed method of changing particular features of a government mark the line between amendment and revolution, and render a resort to the latter for the purpose of amelioration or reform, save in extreme cases of oppression, unnecessary. According to our American theory of government, revolution and amendment both rest upon the doctrine that the people are the source of all political power, and each of them is the exercise of an ultimate right. But this right is exercised, in the process of amendment, in a prescribed form, which preserves the continuity of the existing government, and changes only such of its fundamental rules as require revision, without the destruction of any public or private rights that may have become vested under the former rule. Revolution, on the contrary, proceeds without form, is the violent disruption of the obligations resting on the authority of the former government, and terminates its existence often without saving any of the rights which may have grown up under it.”

I think that I have now vindicated my third proposition with regard to what may be a revolution and what the position of the government may be made by revolution. Now I come to the “transcendental, metaphysical nonsense,” as the gentleman has called it, of the fourth proposition. Still the old principle of calling names!

JUDGE KELLEY. No: I only queried.

MR. NORTHROP. Well, then, as long as it is a mere question I shall take the liberty to answer it as gently as possible.

My fourth proposition is in these words: “A successful revolution against the Constitution by those in power subverts the principles of our government, produces anarchy and establishes a despotism.” Well, I maintain that such is the fact, and I say that it is clear. I have shown you what revolution is. The difficulty about the wheel is out

of the way. I say, therefore, under Judge Curtis' idea of revolution, when Mr. Lincoln undertakes to antagonize the Constitution, he being the executive department of the government, and succeeds in putting down, or putting out, or over-riding any principle of that Constitution, he subverts the principles of our government.

Very well; what is the case when the principles of the government are subverted? When you count twenty you cannot arrive at the result without going through one, two, three, etc., to twenty. There must be a beginning, a middle and an end. A word is not revolution. There must be a certain gradation of proceedings in all things. You first subvert the principles of the government in the very act of successful revolution; and you produce anarchy, because you take away the principles and controlling elements of the Constitution; you deprive us of all that which we have looked up to as the paramount and controlling influence; and for the time there is anarchy, because there is no law. What is the result? Hard upon the heels of that comes despotism; and I admit that it comes so quickly that it was hardly worth while for me to say that when you subvert the principles of the government anarchy is produced and a despotism established. It is true that the despotism may hasten on so rapidly as hardly to give breathing space before it comes. But I will give you this intermediate space in order that your blood may cool and reflection may come again. A successful revolution does subvert the principles of government; and, when they are subverted, there is no law until this struggling despotism establishes itself; and then, as the gentleman admits, and I admit, there is no longer anarchy. But I do not want to see either of these grades. I do not want to see the principles of government subverted. I do not want to see anarchy, and confusion, and terror, and lawlessness; and I do not want to see a despotism established out of these elements of disorder. I believe that there is anarchy and despotism in this country now, and that the hand of power alone keeps together certain parts of it. Even in places where there is no war, you will not allow men to rise up and protest under the law; and this is one of the proofs of anarchy—the law is set aside. Now, gentlemen, I think that I have shown the gradation to despotism, notwithstanding the “transcendental, metaphysical nonsense” of the proposition.

The gentleman does not like any of my words. I am rather sorry for that; but as to the fifth proposition, which he attempts to answer—“that the theory of the equality of the negro with the white man is not a justifiable principle of revolution”—he says that he does not understand it—that he would have understood it, if I had said “cause” instead of “principle.” Now, every cause is supposed to have a principle, and I prefer the word principle, because I still think, notwithstanding his criticism, that it is the better word. I have charged that Mr. Lincoln's theory of the equality of the negro with the white man and his opposition to slavery, with his carrying out the New England doctrines against slavery, with his proclamation in relation to slavery which is headed “To whom it may concern,” and in which the only condition upon which he will receive the South back is stated to be that of giving up slavery—I say that that theory of Mr. Lincoln about the giving up of slavery, and about gradually working the black man on to an equality with the white man, is not a justifiable principle of revolution. The theory, sir, is your principle. I want you to stop there. When you adopt it and preach it as a cause, I want you to pause at that second step. I say that, if you hold that theory, I do not consider it a justifiable principle on which you shall assert the right or the propriety of revolutionizing the government. I maintain, therefore, that it is not a proper and a justifiable principle of revolution. I think that the proposition is clear; I think that the words are tolerably fair. I certainly think that they have meaning.

I propose now, although my time is short, to illustrate what I have said and what the gentleman has denied in relation to the third question. The third question is this: “Do you approve of any, or all, of the twenty-three Acts of Congress, each having for its object the declared purpose of giving to the negro all the rights, immunities, and privileges which have hitherto been enjoyed by the white man only?” The gentleman tells you that no such Act has been passed—that Congress has no such power—that it is the States which have the right to make “citizens.” Well, gentlemen, there are rights, immunities, and privileges which have been enjoyed by the white man beside the simple one of citizenship; and I am rather astonished that the gentleman has admitted even that the States have the right to do such a thing—to determine who shall be citizens. But

he admits that sovereign principle, and tells you that Congress has no power in that respect. In this he illustrates to you what I mean by the sovereignty of the States in certain things. He has admitted in his remarks, that the power of conferring citizenship is one which is vested in the States, and that Congress has no right to take it from them or modify it. Very well. Now, I have here a series of Acts on this subject, (although I am sorry to say I shall not be able to specify them all at this late hour,) which have been passed by Congress, all going to give the negro certain rights, immunities, privileges, and protections, which he did not formerly enjoy. I will for the present simply turn to a few of these Acts, and show you how they culminate. They are with regard to the negroes of the South. They are Acts of every conceivable character in relation to the negroes—protecting them, giving them privileges and immunities; and you will be enabled to determine whether I am correct in stating the result of these Acts. Here is an Act (Statutes at Large of the United States, Vol. XII, page 650, chap. xxxiii,) entitled, “An Act to incorporate the National Association for the relief of destitute colored women and children.” It incorporates persons who are to be citizens of Washington City, for the purpose of giving negroes certain immunities in an association in that city.

I come now to chapter ciii, page 796, of the same volume, in which certain persons are constituted and declared to be a body politic and corporate by the name and title of “The Institution for the Education of Colored Youth,” to be located in the District of Columbia, and the objects of the institution are to educate and improve the moral and intellectual condition of such of the colored youth of the nation as may be placed under its care and influence.

I then come to chapter cv, where I find “An Act to incorporate the ‘St. Ann’s Infant Asylum’ in the District of Columbia;” and I find that in section second there is no distinction taken between whites and blacks, but it is provided that the corporation shall take charge of all foundlings and infant children committed to their care.

I have not time now to show the extent of these Acts which have been passed for the first time in relation to the colored race. I know that in most cases of this kind progress toward results is slow; but we must bear in mind the fact that this war is being carried on for the purpose of freeing the slaves, and for no other purpose, and concurrent with this, comes this extensive system of negro education and exclusive benevolence. I have heretofore asked the gentleman, and I still ask him, what the war is for, if I am not correct in this; whether it is to be an eternal war, or whether it is a war for peace. I also ask him what he has asked me, as to the condition of the States of the South—whether they are within the Union or not within the Union. This is an important question, which I suppose he will yet answer, and which I have asked in the course of the debate. All these are important for the purpose of showing why the war is carried on, and to what results, and for what object. I want to get at the fact; I want to get at the marrow, the intention, the design. That is my reason for asking these questions; I do not do it for the purpose of putting the gentleman in a dilemma. My object is to illustrate this one point as to the theory and doctrine of the administration; for I see different gentlemen who support that administration, taking opposite and totally diverse views on this subject.

I will at another time take up the gentleman’s answers to certain questions; but for the present, I will devote the few moments left me to some matters left open in the last discussion—matters to which the gentleman alluded, and which I did not at that time answer.

I think that the gentleman alluded, in his last speech—or one of his late speeches, to what he had seen and heard in relation to the announcement of the Democratic party about a “*free ballot or a free fight*.” The gentleman has introduced that, and I will try to tell him, if I can, precisely what is meant by it. The party to which the gentleman belongs has in a measure answered it, or attempted to answer it, or put a construction upon it. In their procession on a Saturday night, a week or so ago, they took up this very question of “a free ballot or a free fight,” and they added a few words which made the motto read thus: “A free ballot for loyal men; a free fight with traitors.” Now, I will ask the gentleman to explain to me the meaning of that qualification. In explaining my theory on the subject, I may go a little into his province, and say what I understand his friends to mean. One of the cardinal rights which we claim is the right to a free

election, unawed by bayonets, unchanged by fraud. The gentleman has referred me to the courts as the tribunals for the adjudication of my rights, when he knows that I have no *status* there to have my rights adjudicated; he and his party have passed laws which deprive me of that resource. He tells me, also, that there is another way in which, if a wrong is done, it may be righted; and he says that mode is through the ballot-box—by election. Now, sir, all that the Democratic party asks is that right of election shall be untrammelled; a free election, or a free fight. That is what we ask and that is what we propose when we say that, *if you will allow us*, we will resort to that. We have stood passive under more than any suffering people ever endured, for the purpose of trying from time to time to vindicate ourselves by that very right of free ballot. But we know and you know that the free expression of opinion has, upon one pretext or another, been on different occasions put down—that men have been kept away from the ballot-box—that there have been unusual oaths and tests put to them before they were allowed to vote. Thus the sovereign right which resides in the citizen has been trampled upon, or means have been used to prevent its exercise.

The motto which the gentleman refers to as having been adopted by the Democratic party should have, I think, precisely the construction which you would naturally put upon it—that here where there is no war raging and where there is no excuse for bayonets about the ballot-box, there shall be a free ballot, or we fight for the privilege. I do not mine my words, gentlemen; that is just what we mean. It may be “disloyal” to say so. But when you say “a free ballot for loyal men; a free fight with traitors,” I ask you what *you* mean by these qualifications, and if you apply them to Pennsylvania. That is the State I am defending and fighting for—not for South Carolina or any other State, and I ask you to apply all that you have to say on that subject to Pennsylvania; and I now assert again that the doctrine of the Democratic party is, that we will go to the tribunal to which you direct us, and we will struggle there for that right; and if your qualification means that the free ballot is only to be for “loyal” men, who, according to your meaning are the supporters of the administration, then I tell you that the second part of the proposition does come in. *We do not* intend that *you* shall judge that *you alone* have the right to vote.

That is what we mean by the “free ballot,” which we claim. I should not have caused a shock to that delicate sense of propriety which would have every citizen bow when the Administration nods, if the gentleman had not alluded to it. It is a cardinal principle of the party, and I answer frankly that it is going to be carried out in Pennsylvania. Do not refer me to Delaware or Maryland or Kentucky. Give me your application to Pennsylvania, and tell me whether I am “loyal” enough to vote side by side with you in Pennsylvania, at the coming election. And when you announce “a free fight with traitors,” let me know whether every Democrat who stands up in support of his principles as against yours is a traitor or not. That is what I want answered; and I reaffirm the doctrine that the Democratic party do intend, as far as lies within our manhood, to have a free ballot. Do not bar our way, sir, or, I tell you, in full view of the solemnity of the result, there will be dead bodies in front of the ballot-box. [At this point, there were mingled hisses and applause, and considerable confusion, which it required the interposition of the moderator to suppress.] Now, gentlemen, I am not discussing this matter in any spirit of violence or passion; I am not discussing it with threats. I was asked what we meant; and just precisely what you would say, I say. My Republican friends, suppose that we should elect George B. McClellan, President; suppose that at a subsequent election, the question should be between his re-election and the election of somebody else; and suppose you should put on your banners these words, “A free ballot or a free fight.” Put yourselves in that situation. Now, you know how we have been arrested and dragged off to Fort Lafayette and other places without any trial. You know how futile it is for us to go to court for the vindication of our rights. You know that you can plead the President’s order in justification of anything that a man may do against my personal liberty. I have not the legal tribunals left to me; you know it. I have not the right to resort to them for the settlement of questions affecting my liberty. What, then is left to me? There is nothing left to me but the ballot; and, I tell you, I do want that ballot sacred; I do want my right to that ballot protected and respected. It is because bayonets have glistened around ballot-boxes that you have put it into our heads that there may be such an alternative. We have not

raised up a difficulty of this kind on our own mere notion or motion ; you have suggested that there may be that difficulty ; and we tell you frankly and kindly, you must not bar our way to the last resort that is left for us. Give us that ; stand the test of the people's votes as men ; and if Mr. Lincoln or your candidates at the October election be not elected, have the satisfaction of knowing that you have done your duty under the law, and that the people have pronounced upon you. But give us, for God's sake, that last right of ours. Let us go untrammelled to the ballot-box. Keep your bayonets away from it, and let the people—not the army, not the Administration, not the supporters of any particular policy—let the people of Pennsylvania say whom they will have to rule over them, under the Constitution and the laws. This is all we ask, and what we will have.

Do not call us "traitors." We have heard enough of that. If we are traitors, are you not strong enough with your bayonets to drag us before the tribunals of the country and try us for treason ? Why, sir, if there is any man in the community who believes another man to be a traitor, and yet does not take him before the tribunals of the country under the law that he may be tried as such, that man is an accessory in treason.

But, sir, that is what we mean. Leave us this last right. Do not say that we are traitors, and then proceed to pronounce judgment upon us, acting as judge, jury and executioner. That is what we mean when we give this warning. It is not addressed to you, sir, nor to the gentlemen who are here. No ; I know perfectly well that the men who have sat here so honestly and earnestly, are men who bar no man's rights on either side. In reference to anything under the law and the Constitution, I would trust myself to the very death with my Republican friends who have attended these meetings. It is not from such as you that I fear for my country or my rights. You have behaved too nobly for that. You have behaved as men who believe in the importance of men's rights. It is not such as you to whom we address ourselves ; it is only to those who have ulterior objects, bad designs, and the heart to commit crimes in furtherance of those designs.

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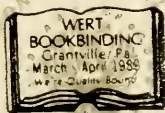
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